

**~ISH-BOSHETH (466)**  
**(Ish-bo'sheth) [meaning Man of Shame]**

- Youngest of Saul's four sons and his successor to the throne. From the genealogical listings it appears that his name was also Eshbaal, meaning, **Man of Baal**.
- As for Ner, he became father to Kish. Kish, in turn, became father to Saul. Saul, in turn, became father to Jonathan and Malchi-shua and Abinadab and Eshbaal. (**1 Chronicles 8:33**)
- As for Ner, he became father to Kish. Kish, in turn, became father to Saul. Saul, in turn, became father to Jonathan and Malchi-shua and Abinadab and Eshbaal. (**1 Chronicles 9:39**)
- However, elsewhere, as in Second Samuel, he is called **Ish-bosheth**, a name in which **baal** is replaced by **bosheth**.
- Forty years old **Ish-bosheth**, Saul's son, was when he became king over Israel, and for two years he ruled as king. Only the house of Judah proved themselves followers of David. (**2 Samuel 2:10**)
- This **Hebrew** word **bo'sheth** is found at;
- But the **shameful thing** itself has eaten up the toil of our forefathers from our youth, their flocks and their herds, their sons and their daughters. (**Jeremiah 3:24**)
- And is rendered, **shameful thing**. **AS, AT, JP, NW, Ro, RS**
- In two other occurrences **ba'`al** and **bo'sheth** are found parallel and in apposition, in which the one explains and identifies the other.
- For your gods have become as many as your cities, O Judah, and as many altars as the streets of Jerusalem you people have placed for the **shameful thing**, altars to make sacrificial smoke to **Baal**. (**Jeremiah 11:13**)
- Like grapes in the wilderness I found Israel. Like the early fig on a fig tree in its beginning I saw the forefathers of you people. They themselves went in to **Baal of Peor**, and they proceeded to

dedicate themselves to **the shameful thing**, and they came to be disgusting like the thing of their love. (**Hosea 9:10**)

- There are also other instances where individuals similarly had **bosheth** or a form of it substituted for **baal** in their names, as, for example, Jerubbesheth for Jerubbaal.
- Who was it that struck down Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? Was it not a woman that pitched an upper millstone upon him from on top of the wall so that he died at Thebez? Why did you men have to go so close to the wall? You must also say; Your servant Uriah the Hittite died too. (**2 Samuel 11:21**)
- And he began to call him Jerubbaal on that day, saying; Let Baal make a legal defense in his own behalf, because someone has pulled down his altar. (**Judges 6:32**)
- And Mephibosheth for Merib-baal, the latter being a nephew of **Ish-bosheth**.
- Now Jonathan, the son of Saul, had a son lame in the feet. Five years old he happened to be when the report about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel, and his nurse began to carry him and flee, but it came about that as she was running in panic to flee, he then had a fall and was lamed. And his name was Mephibosheth. (**2 Samuel 4:4**)
- And Jonathan's son was Merib-baal. As for Merib-baal, he became father to Micah. (**1 Chronicles 8:34**)
- And the son of Jonathan was Merib-baal. As for Merib-baal, he became father to Micah. (**1 Chronicles 9:40**)
- The reason for these double names or substitutions is not known. One theory advanced by some scholars attempts to explain the dual names as an alteration made when the common noun **baal**, owner, master, became more exclusively identified with the distasteful fertility god of Canaan, Baal.
- However, in the same Bible book of Second Samuel, where the account of **Ish-bosheth** appears, King David himself is reported as naming a place of battle Baal-perazim, meaning, **Owner of Breakings Through**, in honor of the Lord Yehowah, for as he said; Yehowah has broken through my enemies.

- So David came to Baal-perazim, and David got to strike them down there. At that he said; Yehowah has broken through my enemies ahead of me, like a gap made by waters. That is why he called the name of that place Baal-perazim. (2 Samuel 5:20)
- Another view is that the name **Ish-bosheth** may have been prophetic of that individuals shameful death and the calamitous termination of Saul's dynasty.
- After the death of Saul and his other sons on the battlefield at Gilboa, Abner, a relative of Saul and the chief of his forces, took **Ish-bosheth** across the Jordan to Mahanaim, where he was installed as king over all the tribes except Judah, which recognized David as king.
- At the time Ish-bosheth was 40 years old, and he is said to have reigned for two years. Since the Bible does not say exactly where this two-year reign fits in with the seven-and-a-half-year period when David ruled as king at Hebron, there is no way of resolving differences of opinion held by scholars on the point.
- However, it does seem more reasonable to think that Ish-bosheth was made king shortly after the death of his father, rather than five years later, in which case there would have been a lapse of about five years between his assassination and David's being installed as king over all Israel.
- As for Abner the son of Ner the chief of the army that had belonged to Saul, he took **Ish-bosheth**, Saul's son, and proceeded to bring him across to Mahanaim. (2 Samuel 2:8)
- And to make him king over Gilead and the Ashurites and Jezreel and over Ephraim and Benjamin and over Israel, all of it. (2 Samuel 2:9)
- Forty years old **Ish-bosheth**, Saul's son, was when he became king over Israel, and for two years he ruled as king. Only the house of Judah proved themselves followers of David. (2 Samuel 2:10)
- And the number of the days that David proved to be king in Hebron over the house of Judah came to be seven years and six months. (2 Samuel 2:11)

- When they went into the house, he was lying upon his couch in his inner bedroom, and then they struck him so that they put him to death, after which they removed his head and took his head and walked on the road to the Arabah all night long. (2 Samuel 4:7)
- Thirty years old was David when he became king. For forty years he ruled as king. (2 Samuel 5:4)
- In Hebron he ruled as king over Judah for seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he ruled as king for thirty-three years over all Israel and Judah. (2 Samuel 5:5)
- **Ish-bosheth's** short rule was marked by both internal and external troubles. The war between his house and that of David came to be long drawn out, he lost 360 men to David's 20 in one engagement.
- In time Abner the son of Ner and the servants of **Ish-bosheth**, Saul's son, went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon. (2 Samuel 2:12)
- As for Joab the son of Zeruiah and the servants of David, they went out and later met together by the pool of Gibeon, and they kept sitting, these on this side of the pool and those on that side of the pool. (2 Samuel 2:13)
- Finally Abner said to Joab; Let the young men rise up, please, and let them put on a combat before us. To this Joab said; Let them rise up. (2 Samuel 2:14)
- So they rose up and went across by number, twelve belonging to Benjamin and **Ish-bosheth**, Saul's son, and twelve from the servants of David. (2 Samuel 2:15)
- And they began grabbing hold of one another by the head, with the sword of each one in the side of the other, so that they fell down together. And that place came to be called Helkath-hazzurim, which is in Gibeon. (2 Samuel 2:16)
- And the fighting came to be extremely hard on that day, and Abner and the men of Israel were finally defeated before the servants of David. (2 Samuel 2:17)
- Now the three sons of Zeruiah happened to be there, Joab and

**Abishai and Asahel, and Asahel was swift on his feet, like one of the gazelles that are in the open field. (2 Samuel 2:18)**

- **And Asahel went chasing after Abner, and he did not incline to go to the right or to the left from following Abner. (2 Samuel 2:19)**
- **At length Abner looked behind him and said; Is this you, Asahel? To which he said; It is I. (2 Samuel 2:20)**
- **Then Abner said to him; Veer to your right or to your left and seize one of the young men as yours and take what you strip off him as yours. And Asahel did not want to turn aside from following him. (2 Samuel 2:21)**
- **So Abner said to Asahel yet again; Turn your course aside from following me. Why should I strike you down to the earth? How, then, could I raise my face to Joab your brother? (2 Samuel 2:22)**
- **But he kept refusing to turn aside, and Abner got to strike him in the abdomen with the butt end of the spear, so that the spear came out from his back, and he fell there and died where he was. And it came about that all those who came to the place where Asahel fell and then died would stand still. (2 Samuel 2:23)**
- **And Joab and Abishai went chasing after Abner. As the sun was setting they themselves came to the hill of Ammah, which is in front of Giah on the way to the wilderness of Gibeon. (2 Samuel 2:24)**
- **And the sons of Benjamin went collecting together behind Abner, and they came to be one company and kept standing upon the top of one hill. (2 Samuel 2:25)**
- **And Abner began to call to Joab and say; Is the sword going to eat endlessly? Do you not really know that bitterness is what will develop at last? How long, then, will it be before you say to the people to turn back from following their brothers? (2 Samuel 2:26)**
- **At that Joab said; As the true God is living, if you had not spoken, then only by the morning would the people have been withdrawn, each one from following his brother. (2 Samuel 2:27)**
- **Joab now blew the horn, and all the people came to a halt and**

did not continue chasing after Israel anymore, and they did not renew the fighting anymore. (2 Samuel 2:28)

- As for Abner and his men, they marched through the Arabah all that night and went crossing the Jordan and marching through the entire gully and finally came to Mahanaim. (2 Samuel 2:29)
- As for Joab, he turned back from following Abner and began to collect all the people together. And there were missing from the servants of David nineteen men and Asahel. (2 Samuel 2:30)
- And the servants of David, for their part, had struck down those of Benjamin and of the men of Abner, there were three hundred and sixty men that died. (2 Samuel 2:31)
- And the war between the house of Saul and the house of David came to be long drawn out, and David kept getting stronger, and the house of Saul kept declining more and more. (2 Samuel 3:1)
- At the same time his relative Abner kept strengthening himself at the expense of **Ish-bosheth**, even to the point of having relations with one of Saul's concubines, which, according to Oriental custom, was tantamount to treason.
- When rebuked for this by Ish-bosheth, Abner withdrew his support and made a covenant with David, part of which stipulated the return of David's wife, Michal, who was Ish-bosheth's own sister.
- And it came about that while the war between the house of Saul and the house of David kept up, Abner himself was continually strengthening his position in the house of Saul. (2 Samuel 3:6)
- Now Saul had had a concubine whose name was Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah. Later **Ish-bosheth** said to Abner; Why was it that you had relations with the concubine of my father? (2 Samuel 3:7)
- And Abner got very angry at the words of **Ish-bosheth** and went on to say; Am I a dogs head that belongs to Judah? Today I keep exercising loving-kindness toward the house of Saul your father, to his brothers and his personal friends, and I have not let you find yourself in the hand of David, and yet you call me to account for an error concerning a woman today. (2 Samuel 3:8)

- So may God do to Abner and so may he add to it, if, just as Yehowah swore to David, that is not the way that I shall do to him. (2 Samuel 3:9)
- So as to transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul and to establish the throne of David over Israel and over Judah from Dan to Beer-sheba. (2 Samuel 3:10)
- And he was not able to say one word more in reply to Abner because of being afraid of him. (2 Samuel 3:11)
- Accordingly Abner sent messengers to David on the spot, saying; To whom does the land belong? Adding; Do conclude your covenant with me, and, look! My hand will be with you to turn to your side the whole of Israel. (2 Samuel 3:12)
- To this he said; Good! I myself shall conclude a covenant with you. Only one thing there is that I am asking of you, saying; You may not see my face except first you bring Michal, Saul's daughter, when you come to see my face. (2 Samuel 3:13)
- Further, David sent messengers to **Ish-bosheth**, Saul's son, saying; Do give over my wife Michal, whom I engaged to myself for a hundred foreskins of the Philistines. (2 Samuel 3:14)
- So **Ish-bosheth** sent and took her from her husband, Paltiel the son of Laish. (2 Samuel 3:15)
- But her husband kept walking with her, weeping as he walked after her as far as Bahurim. Then Abner said to him; Go, return! At that he returned. (2 Samuel 3:16)
- Meanwhile there had come to be communication by Abner with the older men of Israel, saying; Both yesterday and previously you proved yourselves seeking David as king over you. (2 Samuel 3:17)
- And now act, for Yehowah himself said to David, By the hand of David my servant I shall save my people Israel from the hand of the Philistines and from the hand of all their enemies. (2 Samuel 3:18)
- Then Abner also spoke in the ears of Benjamin, after which Abner also went to speak in the ears of David at Hebron all that was

- good in the eyes of Israel and in the eyes of the whole house of Benjamin. (2 Samuel 3:19)
- When Abner came to David at Hebron, and with him twenty men, David proceeded to make a feast for Abner and for the men that were with him. (2 Samuel 3:20)
  - Then Abner said to David; Let me rise up and go and collect all Israel together to my lord the king, that they may conclude a covenant with you, and you will certainly become king over all that your soul craves. So David sent Abner off, and he got on his way in peace. (2 Samuel 3:21)
  - Abner's death at the hand of Joab further weakened **Ish-bosheth's** position, and shortly thereafter two of his own captains assassinated him while he was taking his midday siesta.
  - And here David's servants and Joab were coming from a raid, and the spoil that they brought with them was abundant. As for Abner, he was not with David in Hebron, for he had sent him off, and he was on his way in peace. (2 Samuel 3:22)
  - And Joab and all the army that was with him came in, and they now reported to Joab, saying; Abner the son of Ner came to the king, and he proceeded to send him off, and he is on his way in peace. (2 Samuel 3:23)
  - So Joab went in to the king and said; What have you done? Look! Abner has come to you. Why was it that you sent him off so that he successfully went away? (2 Samuel 3:24)
  - You well know Abner the son of Ner, that it was to fool you that he came and to get to know your going out and your coming in and to get to know everything that you are doing. (2 Samuel 3:25)
  - With that Joab went out from David and sent messengers after Abner, and they then had him return from the cistern of Sirah, and David himself did not know of it. (2 Samuel 3:26)
  - When Abner returned to Hebron, Joab now led him aside inside the gate to speak with him quietly. However, there he struck him in the abdomen, so that he died because of the blood of Asahel his brother. (2 Samuel 3:27)



- When the son of Saul heard that Abner had died in Hebron, then his hands became feeble and all the Israelites themselves were disturbed. (2 Samuel 4:1)
- And there were two men, chiefs of the marauding bands, that happened to belong to the son of Saul, the name of the one being Baanah and the name of the other being Rechab, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, of the sons of Benjamin, for Beeroth, too, used to be counted as part of Benjamin. (2 Samuel 4:2)
- And the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, proceeded to go and come to the house of **Ish-bosheth** about when the day had heated up, as he was taking his noonday siesta. (2 Samuel 4:5)
- And here they came into the middle of the house as men fetching wheat, and then struck him in the abdomen, and Rechab and Baanah his brother themselves escaped detection. (2 Samuel 4:6)
- When they went into the house, he was lying upon his couch in his inner bedroom, and then they struck him so that they put him to death, after which they removed his head and took his head and walked on the road to the Arabah all night long. (2 Samuel 4:7)
- However, when these murderers, in seeking a reward, brought **Ish-bosheth's** head to David, he had them put to death and ordered the head interred in the tomb of Abner at Hebron.
- Eventually they came bringing the head of **Ish-bosheth** to David at Hebron and said to the king; Here is the head of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul your enemy who looked for your soul, but Yehowah gives to my lord the king revenge this day upon Saul and his offspring. (2 Samuel 4:8)
- However, David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and said to them; As Yehowah who redeemed my soul out of all distress is living. (2 Samuel 4:9)
- When there was one reporting to me, saying; Here Saul is dead, and he himself in his own eyes became like a bringer of Good News, I, however, took hold of him and killed him in Ziklag when

- it was due for me to give him the messengers fee. (2 Samuel 4:10)
- How much more so when wicked men themselves have killed a righteous man in his own house upon his bed? And now should I not require his blood from your hands, and must I not clear you out of the earth? (2 Samuel 4:11)
  - With that David commanded the young men and they killed them and cut off their hands and their feet and hanged them by the pool in Hebron, and the head of **Ish-bosheth** they took and then buried in the burial place of Abner in Hebron. (2 Samuel 4:12)
  - Thus it was that the dynasty of Saul, which could have lasted, to time indefinite, came to its abrupt and humiliating end, not because of the sins of **Ish-bosheth**, but instead, because of those of his father.
  - At this Samuel said to Saul; You have acted foolishly. You have not kept the commandment of Yehowah your God that he commanded you, because, if you had, Yehowah would have made your kingdom firm over Israel to time indefinite. (1 Samuel 13:13)
  - But Samuel said to Saul; I shall not return with you, for you have rejected the word of Yehowah, and Yehowah rejects you from continuing as king over Israel. (1 Samuel 15:26)
  - As Samuel was turning about to go, he immediately grabbed hold of the skirt of his sleeveless coat, but it ripped away. (1 Samuel 15:27)
  - At this Samuel said to him; Yehowah has ripped away the royal rule of Israel from off you today, and he will certainly give it to a fellowman of yours who is better than you. (1 Samuel 15:28)
  - And, besides, the Excellency of Israel will not prove false, and He will not feel regrets, for He is not an earthling man so as to feel regrets. (1 Samuel 15:29)
  - It is true, **Ish-bosheth** was a weak ruler, one who gained and held the throne principally because of the strength of Abner. Nevertheless, David referred to him as, a righteous man.
  - How much more so when wicked men themselves have killed a

**righteous man in his own house upon his bed? And now should I not require his blood from your hands, and must I not clear you out of the earth? (2 Samuel 4:11)**